

October 9, 2018



The Honorable Ajit Pai
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

In the Matter of: Nomination for Universal Service Administrative Company Board of Directors
CC Docket Nos. 97-21 and 96-45

Dear Chairman Pai:

On behalf of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), we are writing to express our support for the appointment of Julie Tritt Schell to the USAC Board of Directors to represent schools. CCSSO is the national organization representing the public officials who lead the departments of education in every state and our members are deeply grateful for the ways the E-rate program has helped to improve and modernize education in this country.

CCSSO became involved in E-rate in its earliest days, hosting a small ad-hoc group of state officials who understood that in order for their schools to take full advantage of the discounts, they needed to provide robust training and outreach, and be the state-level partner with the E-rate Administrator. That group was comprised of about 6 people, including Julie Tritt (Schell), which then worked collectively to recruit E-rate coordinators from nearly every other state in the country and advise the (then) SLC as they worked to implement the program. Soon after, the CCSSO E-rate Group evolved into its own, separate volunteer organization, known as the State E-rate Coordinators' Alliance (SECA), of which Ms. Tritt Schell remains its co-chair.

Since E-rate's first days, she has worked tirelessly on behalf of schools in her own state, but also has represented the interests of schools and libraries nationwide. She communicates daily with 45 other state E-rate coordinators which gives her the benefit of a bottom-up understanding of the challenges faced by applicants of all sizes and geographies. As a former state educational technology director, she also has a unique top-down perspective of what it takes to manage large, complex initiatives, and multi-million dollar budgets.

CCSSO believes that in order for USAC to successfully implement the Commission's universal service goals, it must appoint representatives to the USAC board who not only have a thorough understanding of the program, but who will be committed to the work that such governance should require. It is our opinion that Ms. Tritt Schell is the person that would represent school officials with distinction.

For all of these reasons, we encourage you to appoint Julie Tritt Schell to the USAC Board of Directors on behalf of schools.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Carissa Miller", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Carissa Moffat Miller
Executive Director

